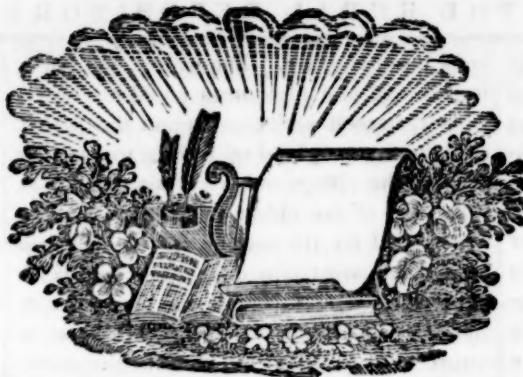


THE RURAL



REPOSITORY.

DEVOTED TO POLITE LITERATURE, SUCH AS MORAL AND SENTIMENTAL TALES, ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS, BIOGRAPHY, TRAVELING SKETCHES, AMUSING MISCELLANY, HUMOROUS AND HISTORICAL ANECDOTES, SUMMARY, POETRY, &c.

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SELECT TALES.

The Widow and her Son.

BY W. IRVING.

During my residence in the country, I used frequently to attend at the old village church. Its shadowy aisles—its moldering monuments—its dark oaken paneling, all reverend with the gloom of departed years, seemed to fit it for the haunt of solemn meditation. A Sunday, too, in the country, is holy in its repose; such a pensive quiet reigns over the face of nature, that every restless passion is charmed down, and we feel all the natural religion of the soul, gently springing up within us.

'Sweet day, so pure, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky.'

I do not pretend to be what is called a devout man; but there are feelings which visit me in a country church, amid the beautiful serenity of nature, which I experience nowhere else; and if not a more religious, I think I am a better man on Sunday than on any other of the whole seven.

But in this church I felt myself continually thrown back upon the world by the frigidity and pomp of the poor worms around me.—The only being that seemed thoroughly to feel the humble and prostrate piety of a true christian, was a poor decrepid old woman, bending under the weight of years and infirmities. She bore the traces of something better than abject poverty. The lingerings of decent pride were visible in her appearance. Her dress, though humble in the extreme, was scrupulously clean. Some trivial respect too had been awarded her, for she did not take her seat among the village poor, but sat alone on the steps of the altar. She seemed to have survived all friendship, all society;—and to have nothing left her but the hopes of heaven. When I saw her feebly rising and bending her aged form in prayer—habitually conning her prayer book, which her palsied hand and failing eyes would not permit her to read, but which she evidently knew by heart; I felt persuaded that the faltering voice of that poor woman arose to

heaven far before the responses of the clerk, the swell of the organ, or the chanting of the choir.

I am fond of loitering about country churches, and this was so delightfully situated, that it frequently attracted me. It stood on a knoll round which a small stream made a beautiful bend, and then wound its way through a long reach of soft meadowy scenery. The church was surrounded by yew trees which seemed almost coeval with itself. Its tall Gothic spire shot up lightly from among them, with rooks and crows generally wheeling about it. I was seated there one still, sunny morning, watching two laborers who were digging a grave. They had chosen one of the most remote, neglected corners of the churchyard; where, from the number of nameless graves around it, would appear that the indigent and friendless were huddled into the earth. I was told that the new made grave was for the only son of the poor widow. While I was meditating on the distinctions of worldly rank, which extended thus down into the very dust—the toll of the bell announced the approach of the funeral. They were the obsequies of poverty; with which pride had nothing to do.—A coffin of the finest materials, without pall or covering, was borne by some of the villagers. The sexton walked before with an air of cold indifference. There were no mock mourners in the trappings of affected woe; but there was one real mourner who feebly tottered after the corpse. It was the aged mother of the deceased—the poor old woman whom I had seen seated on the steps of the altar. She was supported by a friend, who was endeavoring to comfort her. A few of the neighboring poor had joined the train, and some children of the village were running hand in hand shouting with unthinking mirth, and now pausing to gaze with childish curiosity on the grief of the mourner.

As the funeral train approached the grave, the parson issued from the church porch arrayed in the surplice, with prayer book in hand, and attended by the clerk. The service, however, was a mere act of charity.—

The deceased had been destitute, and the survivor was pennyless. It was shuffled through therefore, in form, but coldly and unfeelingly. The well-fed priest moved but a few steps from the church door; his voice could scarcely be heard at the grave; and never did I hear the funeral service, that sublime touching ceremony, turned into such a frigid mummery of words.

I approached the grave. The coffin was placed on the ground. On it were inscribed the name and age of the deceased—'George Sommers, aged 26 years.' The poor mother had been assisted to kneel down at the head of it. Her withered hands were clasped, as in prayer, but I could perceive, by a feeble rocking of the body, and a convulsive motion of the lips, that she was gazing on the last reliques of her son, with the yearnings of a mother's heart.

Preparations were made to deposit the coffin into the earth. There was that bustling stir which breaks so harshly on the feelings of grief and affection; directions given in the cold tones of business; the striking of the spades into the sand and gravel; which at the grave of those we love, is, of all sounds, the most writhing. The bustle around seemed to awaken the mother from a wretched reverie. She raised her glazed eyes, and looked about with a faint wildness. As the men approached with cords to lower the coffin into the grave, she wrung her hands and broke into an agony of grief. The poor woman who attended her took her by the arm, endeavoring to raise her from the earth, and to whisper something like consolation—'Nay, now—nay, don't take it so sorely to heart.' She could only shake her head and wring her hands as one not to be comforted.

As they lowered the body into the earth, the creaking of the cords seemed to agonize her; but when on some accidental obstruction; there was a jostling of the coffin, all the tenderness of the mother burst forth; as if any harm could come to him who was far beyond the reach of worldly suffering.

I could see no more—my heart swelled into my throat—my eyes filled with tears—I

felt as if I were acting a barbarous part in standing by and gazing idly on this scene of maternal anguish. I wandered to another part of the churchyard, where I remained until the funeral train had dispersed.

When I saw the mother slowly and painfully quitting the grave, leaving behind her the remains of all that was dear to her on earth and returning to silence and destitution, my heart ached for her. What, thought I, are the distresses of the rich!—they have friends to soothe—pleasures to beguile—a world to divert and dissipate their griefs. What are the sorrows of the young? Their growing minds soon close above the wound—their elastic spirits soon rise above the pressure—their green and ductile affections soon twine round new objects. But the sorrows of the poor, who have no outward appliances to soothe—the sorrows of the aged, with whom life at best is but a wintry day, and who can look for no aftergrowth of joy—the sorrows of the widow, aged, solitary, destitute, mourning over an only son, the last solace of her years; these are indeed, sorrows which make us feel the impotency of consolation.

It was some time before I left the churchyard. On my way homeward, I met with the woman who had acted as comforter; she was just returning from accompanying the mother to her lonely habitation, and I drew from her some particulars connected with the affecting scene I had witnessed.

The parents of the deceased had resided in the village from childhood. They had inhabited one of the neatest cottages, and by various rural occupations, and the assistance of a small garden, had supported themselves creditably and comfortably, and led a happy and blameless life. They had one only son, who had grown up to be the staff and pride of their age:—‘Oh, sir,’ said the good woman, ‘he was so comely a lad, so sweet tempered, so kind to every one around him, so dutiful to his parents. It did one’s heart good to see him on Sunday, dressed out in his best, so tall, so straight, so cheerful, supporting his mother to church—for she was always fonder of leaning on George’s arm, than on her good man’s; And, poor soul, she might well be proud of him, for a finer lad there was not in the country round.’

Unfortunately, the son was tempted, during a year of scarcity and agricultural hardships to enter into the service of one of the small crafts that plied on a neighboring river. He had not been long in this employ when he was entrapped by a press gang and carried out to sea. His parents received tidings of his capture, but beyond that they could learn nothing. It was the loss of their main prop.—The father, who was already infirm, grew heartless and melancholy, and

sunk into his grave. The widow, left lonely in her age and feebleness could no longer support herself and came upon the parish. Still there was a kind of feeling toward her through the village and a certain respect as being one of the oldest inhabitants. As no one applied for the cottage, in which she had passed so many happy days, she was permitted to remain in it, where she lived solitary and almost helpless. The few wants of nature were chiefly supplied from the scanty productions of her little garden which the neighbors would now and then cultivate for her.

It was but a few days before the time at which these circumstances were told me, that she was gathering some vegetables for a repast, when she heard the cottage door suddenly open. A stranger came out, and seemed to be looking eagerly and wildly around. He was dressed in seaman’s clothes, was emaciated and pale, and bore the air of one broken by sickness and hardships. He saw her and hastened towards her, but his steps were faint and faltering; he sank on his knees before her, and sobbed like a child. The poor woman gazed upon him with a vacant and wandering eye—‘Oh! my dear, dear mother! don’t you know your son! your poor boy George?’ It was indeed the wreck of her once noble lad, who, shattered by wounds, by sickness, and foreign imprisonment, had, at length, dragged his wasted limbs homeward, to repose among the scenes of his childhood.

I will not attempt to detail the particulars of such a meeting, where joy and sorrow were so completely blended; still he was alive! he was come home! he might yet live to comfort and cherish her old age! Nature, however, was exhausted within him, and if any thing had been wanting to finish the work of fate, the desolation of his native cottage would have been sufficient. He stretched himself on the pallet on which his widowed mother had passed many a sleepless night, and never rose from it again.

The villagers when they heard that George Sommers had returned, crowded to see him, offering every comfort and assistance that their humble means afforded. He was too weak, however, to talk—he could only look his thanks. His mother was his constant attendant; and he seemed unwilling to be helped by any other hand.

There is something in sickness, that breaks down the pride of manhood; that softens the heart, and brings it back to the feelings of infancy. Who that has languished, even in advanced life, in sickness, in pain and despondency; who that has pined on a weary bed in the neglect and loneliness of a foreign land, but has thought on the mother that looked on his childhood; that smoothed his

pillow and administered to his helplessness? Oh! there is an enduring tenderness in the love of a mother to a son that transcends all other affections of the heart. It is neither to be chilled by selfishness, nor daunted by danger, nor weakened by worthlessness, nor stifled by ingratitude. She will sacrifice every comfort to his convenience; she will surrender every pleasure to his enjoyment; she will glory in his fame, and exult in his prosperity; and, if misfortune overtake him, he will be the dearer to her from his misfortunes; and if all the world beside cast him off, she will be all the world to him.

Poor George Sommers had known what it was to be in sickness and none to soothe—lonely and in prison, and none to visit him.—He could not endure his mother from his sight; if she moved away his eye would follow her. She would sit for hours by his bed, watching him as he slept. Sometimes he would start from a feverish dream, and look anxiously up until he saw her bending over him;—when he would take her hand, lay it on his bosom, and fall asleep with the tranquillity of a child. In this way he died.

My first impulse on hearing this humble tale of affliction, was to visit the cottage of the mourner, and administer pecuniary assistance, and if possible, comfort. I found, however, on inquiry, that the good feelings of the villagers had prompted them to do every thing that the case admitted, and as the poor know best how to console each others sorrows, I did not venture to intrude.

The next Sunday I was at the village church; when, to my surprise, I saw the poor old woman tottering down the aisle to her accustomed seat on the steps of the altar.

She made an effort to put on something like mourning for her son; and nothing could be more touching than this struggle between pious affection and utter poverty: a black ribbon or so—a faded black handkerchief, and one or two more such humble attempts to express by outward signs that grief that passes show. When I looked around upon the storied monuments; the stately hatchments; the cold marble pomp, with which grandeur mourned magnificently over departed pride; and turned to this poor widow, bowed down by age and sorrow at the altar of her God, and offering up the prayers and praises of a pious, though a broken heart, I felt that this living monument of real grief was worth them all.

I related the story to some of the wealthy members of the congregation, and they were moved by it. They exerted themselves to render her situation more comfortable, and to lighten her afflictions. It was; however, but smoothing a few steps to the grave. In the course, of a Sunday or two after, she was missed from her usual seat at church,

and before I left the neighborhood I heard—with a feeling of satisfaction, that she had quietly breathed her last, and had gone, to rejoin those she loved, in that world where sorrow is never known; and friends never parted.

For the Rural Repository.

My Adventures.

PART III.

For many days our good ship went rejoicing on her way, but a long calm succeeded in which nature and all existence seemed stagnated, and the sun, as he fulfilled his monotonous mission, was the only moving object in the whole field of vision. There we lay, during nearly a week,

'Like a painted ship,
Upon a painted ocean.'

Our awnings were spread, and the men forbidden to work or walk in the sun which, without protection was absolutely scorching. The wind-sails were of no benefit, for there was not a breath of wind to fill the flapping canvass, or ripple the ocean's motionless face. At such a time, a man must look to his companions for relief, and if there is a quarrelsome fellow among them the best way is to throw him overboard at once. I was happy in the society which now surrounded me. Talbot was generous, fearless and good tempered, desirable qualities anywhere. The first mate, Mr. Jeremy Butler was as singular in character and habits as in person. Mr. Butler was a humpback and not more than four feet in stature. This circumstance did not however lessen him in his own opinion. A more consequential person I never saw. His height on shipboard he considered a positive advantage. 'It takes me to walk between decks' the little man would say, and nothing pleased him more than to see some tall fellow knock his head against the beams. A sailor over five feet was his aversion. The first salutation I ever received from him was a threat occasioned by my laughing at his grotesque appearance, as he was swearing one day at a great six footer of a fellow in the main top, resembling a monkey making grimaces at a bear. Jeremy said nothing at first, and though he 'looked daggers, used none' till he had exhausted his vocabulary of hard names upon the man in the top, among which the words '*long lubberly rascal*' were pronounced with most emphasis and bitterness, when he beckoned me to him. Observing a piece of rope in his hand, I complied rather reluctantly. 'D'ye see this nice bit of rope, youngster' said he. I assured him that I did. 'Well, unless you want me to freshen your headway overboard with it, I advise you hereafter to clap a stopper on your impudent jaw. Laughing at me, was you, ha!' continued Jeremy, increasing in rage and

drawing one end of the rope through his left hand—'Oh, no! Mr. Butler' I replied, 'not at all, Sir, it was that *long* man in the top I was laughing at.' 'Ah! ah! that indeed, that indeed! you was perfectly right. I should have laughed myself at the fellow only it is necessary to keep a sober face before the ship's company. Now what's such a long chap as that good for, unless in case of wreck he might answer for a jury mast. Talking about long fellows my boy,' continued Jeremy, relapsing at once into perfect good humor, 'there was an officer in our mess on board the privateer S. in the late war, so tall that he had to sit down to put his coat on.'

Manuel Rebus, the second mate, was a young Spaniard, very grave in his deportment and attentive to his duties. The cabin was not very large, but there were three pleasant state rooms with two births in each, in one of which I located myself. Rebus played the flute well, and Talbot sang with considerable taste and effect, while Butler supplied his share of the general amusement by telling *yarns*, of which he had any number on hand. He had a fine Newfoundland dog who was either the hero or a very important personage in all his stories. The number of the crew would have excited suspicion in an older person than myself, which their employment during one of the calm days, in hoisting guns out of the hold would by no means have diminished. As it was, I soon learned that the *Traveler* visited the coast of Africa for other commodities than gum and ivory.

Day after day of unchanging sunshine. The winds and waters were in a Lamblike mood. In such weather, as Mr. Butler aptly observed, an old woman might put to sea in a tub. A table was brought up from below and set under the quarter deck awning, and there we made our meals, during the continuance of the pleasant weather. Here too, cards, chess, backgammon, liquor and cigars were in constant requisition. The men slept and smoked and swore. Now and then a shark appeared astern, and for a moment all was lively. A hook baited with pork was thrown overboard, all watched the monster with anxiety. At first he approaches somewhat carelessly, loiters about the inviting object, nibbles warily at one side of it, and then, as if not altogether satisfied with the result of his investigation, sails slowly away; He is not long absent however, for if he has had suspicion probably his appetite overcomes his reason or *instinct*, and once more he draws near the dangerous temptation. For a moment he surveys it, and then, rolling over on his back, makes a greedy snap at the seducing morsel. In an instant he finds himself in another element, and is drawn flouncing upon deck. It is singular with what delight the men cut up the rascal, talking all

the while to him about the importance of keeping a better look out. After duly dissecting him, he is cooked and eaten, but I confess I was never tempted to taste the delicate food.

If I had before doubted the object with which the *Traveler* was fitted out for her voyage to the Coast I might have learned it from a conversation which took place one day between the three worthies who guided the destinies of our ship. They were sitting at the table engaged in their usual pastime of cigars and brandy. 'Wasn't it somewhere about this latitude, Captain' inquired Jeremy, 'we fell in with the French cruiser last year?' 'No! don't you recollect, we were on the southern coast of Cuba.' 'Oh, true, so it was, so it was, well, it was a singular incident any how! You was not with us then, Rebus?' 'No,' replied the grave Spaniard, 'if I may inquire, what was the incident?' 'Yes, you may inquire, and perhaps I'll answer you. But first, suppose you scull that moderate quantity of *aqua fortis* a little more this way if you please. That I'll do. My respects to you, Signor. Well, as the Captain here says we were running smoothly along before the trades, when one morning just at daybreak what should heave in sight but a large waterspout about two miles distant on our starboard quarter, and between us and it, perhaps half way a French armed schooner, looking very much like one of those cruisers which are kept in commission to put down the *Slave Trade*,' said Butler with a knowing grin. 'Well, the waterspout seemed to be making sail rather faster than either of us to such a degree that we deemed it necessary to fire one or two guns by way of breaking it. Whether this effect is occasioned by the shot, or merely by the concussion produced by the discharge of the gun, I am not at present able to inform you, Mr. Rebus, but, in the mean time will trouble you for that brandy which seems to be in a manner becalmed under your lee.' Mr. Rebus pushed him the bottle and he proceeded. 'However this may be, we fired with shot, and unluckily instead of hitting the spout our ball landed in the schooner's hammock nettings just as the men were stowing away their hammocks. Aloft went the tricolor, and Johnny Crapeau not seeing it was all a mistake, luffed up at once into the wind, and before we had time to luff also gave us a raking fire. This did us but little injury only cutting away a brace or so and maiming one or two gentlemen of color who were taking passage with us for the Havana. Of course we had to return the compliment, and not knowing you perceive but what she was a pirate under French colors we determined to fight both her and the waterspout. Very luckily we had on board a shifting twelve

pound caronade, which, on our coming to close quarters did excellent service. At the first discharge we carried away the fellow's galley, cook and all overboard, and the way for about ten minutes we threw the balls into the frog soup was wonderful. A squall shortly after separated us, and we saw no more of the Frenchman.'

I have before remarked how much of our happiness at sea depends upon our companions. They are our world. It is not on shipboard as in society on shore where you may adopt to a despicable enemy Uncle Toby's language to the fly, 'There is room enough in the world for me and thee.' There is not room enough on board a ship for two unfriendly individuals. They must live together, perhaps mess together, sleep within a few feet of each other, perform the same duties and pass months in most unamiable proximity. We had a monkey on board the *Traveler*, who shewed that he fully appreciated the correctness of the foregoing hints. A long and deadly enmity had subsisted between him and a favorite parrot of the Captain's. It may be that this ill will was excited by the superior estimation in which the bird was held by all hands, whereas Jacko who was very mischievous, and stole every thing in his reach, often got his ears boxed for his impudence. Besides this, the parrot's constant reiteration of 'Pretty Poll' undoubtedly led the monkey to suppose that she desired to institute injurious comparisons between her beauty and his ugliness. What was worse yet, he could never get a sly cuff at her, as Butler's dog, who went by the classical appellation of 'Old Grimes,' uniformly sided with the weaker party. One unfortunate day, however, the parrot had perched upon the starboard cat head and was taking a comfortable nap. The rascally ape saw her unprotected situation, looked cunningly around, then crept stealthily forward stopping every few feet to gaze behind him, 'Old Grimes' was no where in sight, and scrambling up the forecastle like a lamplighter he placed one paw upon the gaudy crest of poor Poll, and lifting her gently up, dropt her overboard. The parrot was with difficulty saved, and a cord by which in future one of Jacko's legs was held fast, prevented his doing farther damage.

Our voyage was not destined to remain calm and peaceful. At the close of a serene, beautiful day, I had turned in, heartily tired of doing nothing. Talbot sat by the table, reading by the imperfect light of a lamp. Butler was amusing himself with pulling the ears of his dog. So still was the ship that, closing my eyes, I might have deemed myself in my bed at home. Sleep fell gently on me, but I did not sleep long. A sharp, bright flash that seemed to pervade every

cranny of the ship and a simultaneous peal of thunder woke me rather abruptly to a change of scene. The vessel was encountering tremendous waves, at every shock of which her strongest timbers trembled, and the increasing roar of the blast fell on my ear with a fury perfectly appalling. There was a great uproar on deck, in the midst of which I was able to distinguish the shrill voice of the first mate, hailing a man aloft. 'Cross trees there! how many more times have I got to ask if that fid is out?' I could not hear the answer, but concluded from what followed, it was not very favorable. 'Bear a hand with it, you long lazy scoundrel. You call yourself a sailor do you? Sailor! you d—d humbug. Are you ready yet, Sir?' 'Aye, aye, Sir, lower away.' I now resolved to make my way to the deck, for I had never before witnessed any thing like a storm. They were sending down top-gallant masts; the mainsail was already clewed up, the mizen topsail furled, and fore and main topsails close reefed. The rain was coming down in a deluge, and over the thick, black mantle of stormy clouds that hid the sky, the lightning flashed in a constant, devouring blaze, shewing a gloomy and pitiless heaven above, and the waves for leagues around tossing in wild, and terrific tumult. The men had got through their hard work aloft, and were now drawing tarpawlings over the guns to secure them against the lightning. Butler was standing near the wheel, talking with Rebus. As for Talbot, having seen all snug, he was preparing to go below. 'Ha! youngster,' said Butler, as soon as he espied me, 'a dirty night this. Have you said your prayers yet?' at this moment a huge sea broke over the weather bow, sweeping the lookout on the forecastle off his legs, capsizing half a dozen hen coops with all their inmates, and nearly drowning an old porker with her interesting litter of young ones. The pigs squealed, the chickens made all manner of distressed noises, and the little man, after bestowing one curse on the fellow at the wheel, laughed loud and long, looking, by the gleams that revealed his singular face and form, more like a grinning imp than a human being. 'Well, Mr. Rebus' he said at length 'I suppose you can spare me now, and at eight bells I'll relieve you punctually. Keep your conductors carefully rigged out, and if the wind freshens much, let the Captain know it. By the way those hencoops may as well be secured. Here, Harris, lash up those hencoops again, and d'ye hear, one or two of you clap on to that old sow's mizen rigging, and put her in irons. If she don't muzzle her turnip trap forthwith, I'll seize her' up and give her a dozen.' So saying, the first mate descended to the cabin, whither I followed him, glad to escape the rain, the violence of which in these latitudes no person can conceive who has not been a witness to them. Mr. Butler, after striking a light and swallowing a strong potion of brandy, betook himself to his birth, informing me that if I wished to sit up, and amuse myself with reading, he would lend me 'A Narration of dreadful Shipwrecks,' which would undoubtedly be very entertaining. I gratefully declined, the edifying offer, and tried once more to woo coy sleep.

The return of morning brought no diminution of the bad weather, but the spirits of all hands seemed to rise in proportion to the violence of the storm. Talbot, as he always did, shewed himself a prime seaman. The *Traveler*, bowed down by the blast, still rushed gallantly onward sending the opposing waves in clouds of spray over her deck. It has been said that in a scene like this, when the deep lifts its hands on high and the powers of the air are combined against the frail bark which struggles like an atom in the seeming chaos, man may deeply learn his insignificance. I humbly think that there he may learn his greatness. For there, upon the vast and troubled waters is his little vessel, the work of human ingenuity, riding buoyantly on the highest billow, while human skill and daring keep the storm at bay, and carry her through the warring elements, unscathed and triumphant.

It was not till night again set in that the gale abated. The sea still ran very high, but the wind, though strong, blew no longer in fitful and irregular gusts. Before the middle watch, topgallant masts were again got up, topgallant yards crossed, three reefs shaken out of the topsails, and the main tack hauled aboard. The sky too presented favoring appearances, and as I was descending the companionway I paused to observe the first, and only opening in the dark canopy above. The fragments of a thick cloud were separating, and in the blue space from which they suddenly retired, one pearly star was shining like the solitary fire which burns upon the altar of Hope, when all the other lights of the heart have gone out.

O. P. B.

WEDDING RINGS.—The singular custom of wearing wedding rings, appears to have taken its rise among the Romans. Before the celebration of their nuptials, there was a meeting of friends at the house of the lady's father, to settle the articles of the marriage contract, when it was agreed that the dowry should be paid down on the wedding day, or soon after. On this occasion there was commonly a feast, at the conclusion of which, the man gave to the woman a ring as a pledge, which she put on the *fourth* finger of the left hand, *because it was believed that a nerve reached from there to the heart*, and a day was then fixed for the marriage.



FRANKLIN.

BIOGRAPHY.

Benjamin Franklin.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, a native of Boston, was born on the 17th January, 1706. The paternal branch of his ancestors inhabited the county of Northampton, in England. His mother was a native of Boston, and was descended from one of the principal settlers of New-England. From the facility he discovered in learning the rudiments of his native language, his parents believed him endowed with more than ordinary genius, and resolved to raise him to the profession of a clergyman. Before he had reached his eighth year he had attained a great reputation in his class, for industry and capacity. But these academical honors, and hopes of ecclesiastical distinction, were of short duration, for towards the end of the first year his parents discovered that the expense of collegiate education would far exceed their slender revenues. For two years he was employed in his father's store, who was a chandler and soap boiler, but disliking the occupation, he conceived an ardent inclination for a sea-faring life. This scheme he was obliged to relinquish, as his father, who had already lost a son upon the sea, violently opposed it. He was finally bound to his own brother as the printer of a newspaper. The newspaper conducted by his brother, being the only vehicle of the kind in New-England, and the second which had been established in America, engrossed, with much interest, the attention of the public. But on account of some misunderstanding, between him and his brother, he was compelled to leave his native place; and

having found a vessel in the harbor, bound to New-York, he engaged a passage, and after a prosperous voyage of a few days, he landed at that city, where, having endeavored for some time in vain, to procure occupation, he proceeded onwards with a faint hope of better fortune, to Philadelphia. He now perceived himself, at the age of 17 years, thrown upon the mercy of the world; at the distance of 400 miles from his native home, with but a single dollar in his pocket. His appearance at Philadelphia, on this occasion, was not a little romantic. He is represented as making his entrance into Market-street, with a roll of bread under each arm, with his pockets enormously distended by shirts and stockings, which he had crammed into them on leaving the boat; and thus accoutred, walking, in the solemnity of a Sunday morning, through the principal streets of the city. An appearance so singular, drew upon him, even in those days of native simplicity, the observation of the inhabitants, among others, of his future wife, in whose eyes he made, it seems, 'a very awkward and ridiculous figure.' Having eat a portion of his bread, and bestowed the remainder on a fellow-passenger, he sought a draught of water from the Delaware. Here he obtained employment as compositor in one of the printing-houses. He visited England a short time afterwards, and remained in London, where he obtained employment in one of the most considerable printing-houses in that city. By his temperate habits and rigid economy he procured not only a decent subsistence for himself, but the means also of relieving the necessities of his friends.

Having resided for a year and a half in the British capital, and growing tired of the uniformity of his life, he conceived a scheme with an enterprising companion, of traveling through the continent of Europe. But by the accidental intervention of a mercantile friend, these designs were interrupted; he persuaded him to accompany him as clerk, and on the 22d July, 1726, they set sail for America, and arrived at Philadelphia on the 11th of October. In 1730, he married a lady, whose maiden name was Read; whom he had courted before his departure for England, had forgotten during his absence, and now espoused in her widow-hood. To others Franklin has recommended his own example of early marriage, as an incitement to industry, a pledge of honesty, and especially, as a preventive against disreputable attachments; from which he himself was not entirely exempt. An advice which as long as the means of existence are practicable, as it corresponds with the disposition of human nature will rarely be questioned or disobeyed.

Soon after his return to America, in connexion with several young men of respectable character and abilities, he instituted a club, denominated the 'Junto,' in which were discussed, moral and political subjects; an association which endured with undiminished reputation, for 30 years, and was at last succeeded by the present Philosophical Society. In 1732, he commenced, and continued for 25 years, the publication of 'Poor Richard's Almanac';—Of this Almanac, ten thousand copies were distributed every year. The last, of 1757, in which he collected the principal matter of the preceding numbers, was republished in various forms in Great Britain, and thence translated into foreign languages, was dispersed and read with great avidity throughout the whole continent of Europe. In 1736, he was chosen clerk of the general assembly, and in the following year, postmaster of Philadelphia; and being no longer overwhelmed by the blasting influence of domestic necessities, his genius began from this time to emerge, and to be employed in schemes of public utility. In 1741, he commenced the publication of a 'General Magazine and Historical Chronicle for the British Plantations,' which he conducted in addition to his Gazette. By the governor, he was commissioned justice of peace; soon afterwards alderman; and by the corporation one of the common council of the city. He was elected, in 1744, a member of the provincial legislature, and so unlimited a popularity did he obtain in that assembly, notwithstanding his deficient eloquence as a public speaker, that his election was repeated for ten years without the solicitation of a vote. About the year 1745, he discovered various properties of the

Leyden Vial; as the means of accumulating, retaining, and discharging any quantity of the electric matter with safety. He was the first who fired gunpowder, gave magnetism to needles of steel, melted metals, and killed animals of considerable size, by means of electricity.

From his observations upon this fluid, he was at length induced to imagine its identity with lightning. He attempted, therefore, to explain, upon this principle, the theory of thunder-gusts, and of the Aurora Borealis; and in 1749, conceived the design, the most sublime perhaps, that has entered the imagination of man, of drawing from the heavens its lightning, and conducting its terrific energy, harmless into the bowels of the earth. The degree of Masters of Arts was conferred upon him by Yale College, and that of Cambridge, in honor of his discoveries. In 1753, he was sent by the provincial assembly, to conclude a treaty with the Indians at Carlisle; and in the following year was appointed on a more important mission, to Albany, where the British government had assembled a congress of commissioners to confer upon a plan of defence for the colonies, against the threatened hostilities of the French and the incursions of the Savages.

The proprietors of the different provinces becoming too overbearing and tyrannical, drove the assemblies to refer their cause to the jurisdiction of the mother country, and Franklin was appointed by the Pennsylvania Assembly to proceed thither as advocate of the province. He undertook this office without reluctance, embarked upon his voyage in June, and arrived in London in July, 1757. The excellent capacity which Franklin discovered in this negociation, greatly increased his popularity amongst his countrymen, and he was now entrusted with the additional agencies of Massachusetts, Georgia and Maryland: it spread also his reputation more extensively through England. He was now elected, with special honors, a member of the Royal Society, and was admitted to the highest degrees in some of the Scotch and English universities.

In the summer of 1762, he returned to America. Upon his arrival, the assembly of Pennsylvania voted him their thanks for his meritorious services, which as a more solid testimonial of their approbation, they accompanied with a compensation of 5,000 pounds; and as his election had been continued during his absence, he resumed, without interruption, his seat in the house. In 1763, he traveled into the northern colonies, to inspect and regulate the post-offices; performing a tour of about 1,600 miles. In 1764, he again sailed for England on the same mission. After a year's residence in London he made an excursion into Holland and

Germany, and in the year following, to Paris. In the latter place he was received with marks of unusual distinction. He was introduced to Louis, XV, and to the different members of the royal family, and was entertained amongst the nobility and gentry of the court with all the hospitality and courtesy for which the French nation is so distinguished.

The famous project, which the British ministers had formed of taxing the colonies, had been communicated by their agents to the provincial assembly in 1764, some time before the departure of Franklin from America: against this measure, he was among the first and most ardent in proclaiming his opposition. During the violent altercations which arose upon the merits of this subject in parliament, it was proposed by the party in opposition, in order to obtain more ample and authentic information concerning the interests and feelings of the Americans, that Franklin should be interrogated publicly before the house of commons. The whole of this examination, being published, was read with avidity both in America and England.

In May, 1776, he was appointed with John Adams and Edward Rutledge, to hear certain propositions of English commissioners, who had arrived on the coast, whose purpose was, to propose terms of accommodation, or rather 'offer pardon, on submission,' to the American Congress. In the same year, he was appointed commissioner to the court of France. Franklin, though he had designed, after the many fatigues he had undergone in foreign embassies, to spend the evening of his life in his native country, seeing the importance of the emergency, accepted without hesitation, this appointment; and in the end of October, 1776, in the 71st year of his age, set out upon his voyage. At his departure from America, he placed the whole of his possessions in money, between 3,000 and 4,000 pounds, in the hands of Congress, by which he testified his confidence in the success of their cause, and induced others of more wealth to imitate his example.

But notwithstanding a war with England was a national passion with the French, there were circumstances which Franklin had to encounter that obstructed the immediate success of his operations:—Kings are ever averse to patronize rebellion, however their present interests may be promoted by it. The surrender of Burgoyne's army to the provincial troops, occasioned very joyful sensations in that country, and from this period the French rulers began to listen with a more prone attention to his suit, which he continued to urge with increased industry. The American ambassadors were recognized, and the treaty of alliance was concluded, with

the court of Versailles, on the 6th February, 1778. Among the ambassadors of other countries then residing at Paris, he supported the dignity of his character and station; and in his intercourse of visits with them, suffered no neglect of any of the punctillios of honor and ceremony.

When the Russian ambassador, whose card being left at his door, occasioned a return of the *supposed* civility, betrayed much alarm at the accident. Franklin, with his usual composure, observed, that he perceived no cause of embarrassment, 'Prince Bariatenski has but to *erase my name* out of his books of visits received, and I will *burn his card*.'

Perceiving a daily aggravation of his diseases, and the powers of life rapidly declining, and as nothing now remained to detain him, he made haste to set out upon his voyage to America. His extreme infirmity of health, not allowing him to endure, without injury, the motion of the carriage, the Queen's litter and mules were sent to convey him upon his journey to the place of embarkation. He had a prosperous voyage, and arrived on the 14th September, in the harbor of Philadelphia. He was now broken down by the pressure of 80 years.

The news of his arrival at Philadelphia, diffused every where a universal congratulation. It was announced by the ringing of bells, by bonfires and discharge of artillery. He was attended at his landing by the members of Congress, of the University, and the principal citizens, who formed into processions, went out to meet him, and amidst their acclamations, was conducted to his dwelling. From the manner in which he bore his sufferings, and the aspect in which he viewed his approaching dissolution, we refer to this interesting correspondence: 'You kindly inquire after my health,' says he, in a letter to his favorite niece, 'I have not much reason to boast of it. People that will live a long life, and drink to the bottom of the cup, must expect to meet with some of the dregs. However, when I consider how many terrible diseases the human body is liable to, I think myself well off that I have only three incurable ones: the gout, the stone and old age; and these, notwithstanding, I enjoy many comfortable intervals, in which I forget all my ills, and amuse myself in reading or writing and telling many stories, as when you first knew me, a young man about 50.' 'I have grown so old as to have buried most of the friends of my youth. By living 12 years beyond David's period, I seem to have intruded myself into the company of posterity. Yet had I gone at 70, it would have cut off 12 of the most active years of my life; employed, too, in matters of the greatest importance.'

On the 17th of April, 1790, in the 84th year of his age, he expired in the city of Philadelphia; encountering this last solemn conflict, with the same philosophical tranquillity and pious resignation to the will of heaven which had distinguished him through all his life.

MISCELLANY.

An Extract.

THERE is a close connection between ignorance and vice; and in such a country as our own, the connexion is fatal to freedom. Knowledge opens sources of pleasure which the ignorant can never know—the pursuit of it fills up every idle hour, opens to the mind a constant source of occupation, wakes up the slumbering powers, gives the secret contest victory, and unveils to our astonishment ideal worlds; secures us from temptation and sensuality, and exalts us in the scale of rational beings.—When I pass by the grog-shop and hear the idle dispute and obscene song—when I see the cart rolled along filled with intoxicated youth, singing and shouting as they go—when I discover the boat sailing down the river, where you can discover the influence of rum by the noise it makes—I cannot help but ask, were these people taught to read? Was there no social library to which they could have access? Did they ever know the calm satisfaction of taking an improved volume by a peaceful fireside; Or, did they ever taste the luxury of improving the mind? You have hardly ever known a young man that loved his home and his book, that was vicious.—Knowledge is often the poor man's wealth. It is a treasure that no thief can steal, no moth nor rust can corrupt. By this you turn his cottage to a palace, and you give a treasure which is always improving and can never be lost. 'The poor man,' says Robert Hall, 'who has gained a taste for books, will, in all likelihood, become thoughtful; and when you have given the poor a habit of thinking, you have conferred on them a much greater favor than by the gift of money, since you have put in their possession the principle of all legitimate prosperity.'

WHOEVER has acquired a taste for reading, so fixed that it has settled into habit, has become in the highest sense independent of all other sources of amusement, and sufficient to himself. Fashion and society may set up their ephemeral idol, one day admitting, and another excluding him according to its unsettled caprices. They may throw the sunshine of their favor alternately upon the rich, witty, learned, young, fortunate and gay, and he may not be able to claim to be either. But if he have learned really to love study and to hold converse with the mighty dead; he may

set all their derisions at defiance. He can draw his supplies of interest and amusement, and those of the highest order, which life can furnish from his own perennial and exhaustless fountains. Neither need he envy the possessor of the most magnificent apartments, in which to deposit his splendid copies, with their gaudy engravings, gildings, and bindings. To a real lover of books, a stall so that it may be amply furnished, is as good as the Vatican, and Nature offers him her universal ticket of admission to the grand apartment of her reading room; and, seeing him enter satisfied, with his book in his hand, her composed visage will always meet him with a ready welcome.

THE VERY LAST.—'Grandmam,' said an urchin to his father's mother, the other day, living somewhere in Worcester county, 'Grandmam, the rail road is coming through our town.' 'Is it, 'Siah,' said the venerable dame. 'Well, I hope it will come through by daylight, for I long to see one terribly.' *Boston Transcript.*

The Rural Repository.

SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 1836.

MOMENTOUS CONCERNS.—Our readers will perceive by the poetical epistle on our last page, that our fair correspondent has acted upon our advice with respect to the disposal of her Valentine, and as the answer seems to be altogether favorable, we take no little credit to ourselves, for bringing an affair that seems to have been of long standing, so near to an amicable conclusion; and should the negotiation now pending end in a treaty of matrimony, our endeavors, in a small matter, might prove as beneficial as, it is hoped, will be the mediation of Britain between France and the United States, on the momentous question of Peace or War.—We had written thus far, when lo, and behold! what should wing its way into the loop-hole of our attic but the welcome news that France had agreed of her own accord to pay the money. 'And so,' thought we, 'the mediation goes for nothing—and who knows but our humble efforts in the service of our friends may, after all our self gratulations, have availed as little—who knows but the lady intended from the first, ere we gave birth to the thought, to gladden the heart of her despairing swain according to our *wise* suggestion? We must acknowledge, while sitting, pen in hand, alone in our dimly lighted retreat, assaying to tax our poor brains to make out a paragragh, we felt rather crest-fallen as the idea crossed our cranium; but consoled ourselves, at length, with the thought, that even if such should prove to be the case, we had failed of having acquired the credit of a peace-maker in good company; and withal highly felicitated ourselves on the opportunity it afforded us of extending still farther the comparison of our insignificant selves and our puny efforts, with a mighty nation and her noble endeavors to promote peace throughout the world; for, like the British government, we should at least have the satisfaction of having shown our friendly disposition and good will to the parties concerned; and can now as freely offer our congratulations to our respected correspondents, on the success

that seems likely to attend the novel expedient of the fair Isadore to make known the state of her affections to her disconsolate lover, as if we had had a hand in bringing it about ourselves.

HUDSON LUNATIC ASYLUM.—It will be seen by the following extract from the Albany Argus, that the proprietors of this institution have been singularly successful in their treatment of the patients under their care, and it is to be hoped that the friends of those afflicted with Lunacy will avail themselves of the opportunity this Asylum affords of putting them under skillful and judicious treatment.

HUDSON LUNATIC ASYLUM.—S. & G. H. White, M. D. proprietors. From the report of the proprietors of this institution, it appears that eighty-six patients have been treated during the past year, of whom fifty-four have been admitted and thirty-two were remaining January 1, 1835.

Remaining, January 1, 1836, thirty-five patients, to wit: Chronic cases thirty, recent cases five, who are convalescing or much improved.

Two hundred and thirty-nine have been admitted since July 1, 1830, and received the benefit of this institution, the reports of which show the importance of removing patients who are deprived of their reason early to an asylum where they may be restored, under proper treatment, in at least nine cases out of ten. Many improvements have been made, and the accommodations extended, for the better classification of the patients at this establishment.

To Correspondents.

We have on hand a few communications from old correspondents, which will shortly be published. It would be foreign to the plan of our paper to fill its columns wholly, or even for the most part, with original matter; they will therefore see that it cannot be always convenient to publish them in the number following their reception. We endeavor to insert original articles as nearly as possible in the order they are received, excepting such as on account of their length we have not time to examine immediately, and those adapted particularly to the time or season, in which cases, the first are laid by to wait our leisure, and the last take the precedence of articles that are equally suitable at all seasons.

The poetical effusion upon *Slander*, by the 'Minstrel of the Swamp,' came safe to hand, but has for some time been among the missing; it is now, however, found, and will be inserted in our next.

'The Devoted,' is respectfully declined; we presume it is the production of a young writer, as, besides some inconsistencies in the plot, the matter is not sufficiently digested.

'My first Appearance upon the Stage of Life,' and a few stanzas over the signature of W. A. J. are yet to be examined. If approved they will appear either in our next number, or the one succeeding it.

Letters Containing Remittances,

Received at this Office, ending Wednesday last, deducting the amount of Postage paid.

S. D. D. De Ruyter, N. Y. \$1.00; W. J. A. Erieville, N. Y. \$3.00; R. B. Berlin, N. Y. \$2.00; P. M. Richmondville, N. Y. \$2.00; P. M. Andover, Ms. \$2.00.

MARRIED.

At the Manor of Livingston, on the 18th ult. by the Rev. Mr. Van Wagner, Doct. Robert Clow, of Clermont, to Miss Margaret Stuyvesant, daughter of Peter R. Livingston, Esq. of the former place.

At the same place, on the 13th ult. by the same, Mr. Davis S. Wright, of Durham, to Miss Elizabeth Petrie, of the former place.

At the same place, on the 20th ult. by the same, Mr. Waldorf of Kinderhook, to Miss Hannah Nichols of Taghkanic.

On the 24th ult. by the Rev. Mr. Ayres, Mr. Henry T. Levi, of North-East, Dutchess Co. to Miss Clarinda C. Beach, of Sangersfield, Oneida County.

At Rondout on the 10th ult. by the Rev. Mr. Cheeny, Mr. Peter L. Snook, to Miss Hester, daughter of Christian L. Hawyer.

At Eaton Village, on Sunday, the 4th of Oct. last, by the Rev. Mr. Smitzer, Mr. John P. Neal, to Miss Mary Ann Stone, both of Nelson.

DIED.

At New-York, on the 25th ult. Mary B. daughter of Oscar and Mary Dornin, aged 23 months, formerly of this city.



ORIGINAL POETRY.

For the Rural Repository

MR. EDITOR.—The following answer to a poetical effusion that appeared in a late number of the Repository, was to have been forwarded in time for your last number, but was inadvertently mislaid and forgotten—Will you be good enough to insert it in your next? It was originally written on a sheet of fine gilt-edged letterpaper, beneath a small, but elegant copperplate engraving, representing an oak encircled by a vine, on one of the branches of which rested a pair of turtle doves; and after being folded in the most approved style, was sent, inclosing a plain gold ring, to the lady to whom it is addressed.

To Isadore.

Lady, the good old custom I admire,
That waked again thy long neglected lyre;
Wildly the warm blood through each artery flew,
As I perused your welcome *billet doux*:
My heart, loved Isadore, is ever thine—
With joy transported is thy Valentine!

Oh that my simple, trifling gift may find,
With thee, dear maid, at least, acceptance kind;
But on thy favor I would not presume,
Though Hope doth now my lonely path illumine:
Through all thy coldness, Love's pure flame may shine,
And bless, at length, thy faithful Valentine.

Let then this ring my dearest wish explain,
Scorn not the gift, nor deem the donor vain,
If heart and hand he freely offer too,
And in return would ask the same of you—
Oh, bow with him at Hymen's sacred shrine,
And ever be his own, sweet Valentine!

As doth the turtle ever constant prove,
So amid weal or woe, will I, my love;
Then do but whisper soft, "I'll be thy bride,"
And my fond bosom shall thy blushes hide;
As the proud oak sustains the tender vine,
So cherished there shall be my Valentine.

Full oft the towering oak, by lightning cleft,
Doth stand of all its pride and power bereft;
Its foliage sear, its strength and beauty gone,
A blighted thing, men sadly look upon;
Still to its wasted form close clings the vine—
Thus constant mayst thou prove, my Valentine.

But if that circling vine feel first decay,
Its leaves, so bright and green, fade fast away,
The sheltering oak still shields from heat and storm,
Bending, as 'twere in love, its lordly form:
As the firm-set oak to the trembling vine,
So true will be, to thee, thy Valentine.

Now, fare-thee-well, we soon, I trust, shall meet,
And I my homage offer at thy feet;
Then, should the syren Hope indeed prove true,
And not in vain, to thee, thy lover sue,
With joy we'll hasten the *bridal* wreath to twine,
And be, for aye, each other's Valentine.

Kinderhook, Feb. 1836.

ORVILLE.

The Winter King.

BY MISS H. F. GOULD.

O! what will become of thee, poor little bird?
The muttering storm in the distance is heard;
The rough winds are wakening, the clouds growing black?
They'll soon scatter snow flakes all over thy back!
From what sunny clime hast thou wandered away?
And what art thou doing this cold winter day?
I'm picking the gum from the old peach tree,
The storm does not trouble me, Pee, dee, dee!

But, soon there'll be ice weighing down the light bough
On which thou art flitting so playfully now;
And, though there's a vesture well fitted and warm,
Protecting the rest of thy delicate form,

What, then, wilt thou do with thy little bare feet,
To save them from pain, 'mid the frost and the sleet?
I can draw them right up in my feathers, you see
To warm them, and fly away! Pee, dee, dee!

But, man feels a burden of care and of grief,
While plucking the cluster and binding the sheaf
In summer we faint, in the winter we're chilled,
With ever a void that is yet to be filled.
We take from the ocean, the earth, and the air,
Yet, all their rich gifts do not silence our care.
A very small portion sufficient will be,
If sweetened with gratitude—Pee, dee, dee!

But what makes thee seem so unconscious of care?
The brown earth is frozen, the branches are bare;
And how canst thou be so lighthearted and free,
Like Liberty's form, with the spirit of glee,
When no place is near for thy evening rest,
No leaf for thy screen, for thy bosom no nest?
Because the same hand is a shelter for me
That took off the summer leaves—Pee, dee, dee!

I thank thee, bright monitor what thou hast taught
Will oft be the theme of the happiest thought.
We look at the clouds—while the bird has an eye
To Him who reigns over them, changeless and high.
And now, little hero, just tell me thy name,
That I may be sure whence my oracle came,
'Because in all weather I'm merry and free,
They call me the Winter King—Pee, dee, dee.'

From the Forget-Me-Not, for 1836.

The Dying Sister.

BY MARY HOWITT.

WHAT matters it, though Spring-time
Upon the earth is glowing—
What though a thousand tender flowers
On the garden beds are blowing?

What matters it, though pleasant birds
Amongst the leaves are singing,
And a myriad lives, each passing hour,
From mother Earth are springing?

What matters it?—for one bright flower
Is pale, before them lying—
And one dear life, one precious life,
Is numbered with the dying!

Oh! Spring may come, and Spring may go—
Flowers, sunshine, cannot cheer them;
This loving heart, this bright young life,
Will be no longer near them!

Two lights there were within their house,
Like angels round them moving;
Oh, must these two be parted now,
So lonely and so loving!

No longer on the same soft couch
Their pleasant rest be taking—
No longer by each other's smiles
Be greeted at their waking—

No longer, by each other's side,
Over one book, be bending!—
Take thy last look, thy last embrace,
That life, that joy, is ending!

Henceforth thou wilt be all alone!—
What shalt thou do, poor weeper?
Oh human love, oh human woe!
Is there a pang yet deeper?

Ah! yes—the eyes perceive no more—
The last dear word is spoken:
The hand returns no pressure now—
Heart, heart, thou must be broken!

Can it live on without that love
For which its pulse beat ever?
Alas! that loving, trusting heart
Must ache, and bleed, and sever!

Child, cease thy murmuring—God is by,
To unseal that mortal prison;
Mother, look up, for, like our Lord,
Thy blessed one is risen!

Raise thy poor head, poor bruised reed;
Hope comes to the believing!
Father, be strong—be strong in faith—
The dead—the dead are living!

Even from outward things draw peace—
The long night watch is ended;
The morning sun upriseth now,
To new day glory splendid!

So, through the night of mortal life,
Your angel one hath striven—
The eternal suns shine not so bright
As the redeemed in heaven!

To join the spirits of pure,
Your chosen hath departed!
Be comforted!—be comforted,
Ye bowed and broken hearted!

The Late Fire.

Is the Knickerbocker Magazine for January, there is a poetical piece on the late extensive conflagration, vastly superior to the occasional performances suggested by similar occurrences. The following lines, selected from the poem, give a general and comprehensive picture of the calamity, and its principal circumstances:—*Mirror*.

O'er the city's hum,
There rose a cry, which, ere the morn was come,
Swelled to a roar that struck her proudest dumb;
From lip to lip, from street to street it flew—
Thousands to thousands gathered, as it grew:
Peal wakened peal, till tower and dome and spire
Shook with the tocsin of the demon Fire!
Whose beacon glow, re-signaled from the sky,
Flashed floods of light on Fear's dilated eye.
The fearless hearts, still prompt, at Terror's call,
To form, in Danger's front, a breathing wall.
Flocked to the scene. For once the subtle foe
Defied their art, and mocked them with its glow,
Think not before the fiery wreck they quailed—
'Twas not their courage but their means, that failed;
The quenching stream grew stagnant, ere its tide
To the red surge their aching hands could guide:
And the fierce tyrant they so oft had quelled,
Powerless to smite, a conqueror they beheld!

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